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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 07 ABU DHABI 002930

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DEPARTMENT FOR PM A/S HILLEN AND NEA DAS GRAY
DOD FOR OSD A/S RODMAN AND JOINT STAFF J-5/JONES
USCENTCOM FOR J-5/MOELLER
NSC FOR RAMCHAND

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PARM](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [KNNP](#) [IR](#) [IZ](#) [AE](#)

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR GULF SECURITY DIALOGUE WITH UAE

REFS: A) ABU DHABI 2905 AND PREVIOUS, B) ABU DHABI 2855, C) ABU DHABI 2782, D) ABU DHABI 2781, E) ABU DHABI 2695, F) ABU DHABI 2422, G) ABU DHABI 2324, H) ABU DHABI 2285, I) ABU DHABI 2209 (AND PREVIOUS), J) ABU DHABI 2129, K) ABU DHABI 1930, L) ABU DHABI 1903, M) ABU DHABI 1797, N) ABU DHABI 1724, O) ABU DHABI 1422, P) ABU DHABI 288

Classified by Ambassador Michele J. Sison, reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (S) Summary: Embassy Abu Dhabi looks forward to the June 27 Gulf Security Dialogue (GSD) as an opportunity to clarify key areas of potential cooperation with the UAE, particularly vis-a-vis the very real threat that the Emirates feels from Iran. The UAE is also likely to want to expand the agenda to include Lebanon. The GSD comes within the context of a number of recent exchanges, such as the Joint Military Commission (JMC) in Washington and numerous visits to Abu Dhabi by USG officials; we anticipate the GSD will build upon those efforts to produce greater synergy and focus in our cooperation. The UAEG has identified a strong and senior core of five UAE participants for the GSD, selected for their experience and proximity to Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (MbZ), and is prepared to engage in the six proposed topics. This message offers perspective on each of the topics and UAE participants as follows:

--- Defense Cooperation (paras 3-8);
--- Developing Shared Assessment on Iraq (paras 9-13);
--- Regional Stability: Iran, Lebanon (paras 14-19);
--- Energy Infrastructure Security (paras 20-22);
--- Counterproliferation (paras 23-26);
--- Counterterrorism (paras 27-28);
--- and Biographic information (paragraph 29).
End summary.

Program

¶2. (C) Post anticipates the GSD taking place in one session on July 27, running from mid-morning to an early afternoon lunch time, at a venue to be offered by the UAE. The six agenda topics will likely be addressed in turn during this single session. No press or public statement is anticipated, nor desired by the UAEG.

Topics: Defense Cooperation

¶3. (S) The UAE's contribution to U.S. defense interests in

the region has been extensive and enduring. We enjoy the benefits of critical military facilities at Al-Dhafra, Fujairah, and Jebel Ali, and coordination with a generally accommodating UAEG. The UAE has also been a proactive supporter with troops and equipment in places like Kosovo and Afghanistan. As we express appreciation for these benefits of partnership, we also try to remind our hosts that the evolving nature of our military requirements mandates an ever-flexible defense relationship focused on joint planning, constant coordination, and strategic interoperability.

¶4. (S/NF) The GSD offers an opportunity to bring into greater focus the need for close coordination of air and missile defense capabilities in particular. We should highlight again for the UAE the importance of interoperability (with the U.S. and potentially with GCC allies) in setting up a credible air defense -- which naturally raises the questions of integrated Shared Early Warning (SEW) systems, layered defense capabilities, and possible acquisitions such as the PAC-III Patriot missile. While the Emiratis have expressed skepticism about GCC coordination on missile defense, this may be an opportunity to press the UAE to play a more assertive role within the GCC. The Iran threat does not lend itself to delay and GCC inertia.

¶5. (S/NF) The Emiratis understand our arguments about interoperability in discussing key air defense systems, but have not been convinced enough to pursue a potential purchase. We might reiterate the importance of having a network of systems used by the U.S. and other allies in the region to avoid developing an incompatible or even dangerously conflicting air defense system (that may not distinguish targets appropriately).

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¶6. (S/NF) In responding to apparent skepticism about the Patriot's effectiveness last April, U/S Joseph (ref 0) both mentioned encouraging results from recent anti-ballistic missile tests and explained that defensive measures do not need to be 100 percent accurate -- just "credible enough" to deter Iran by convincing it that the effectiveness of its offensive measures has been eroded. (Note: Raytheon has been trying for 10 years to get the UAE to purchase the Patriot without any traction. According to one Raytheon source, the UAEG loaned more than \$1 billion to Russia to help with debt relief after the fall of the Soviet Union and Russia is reportedly trying to satisfy the debt by developing and attempting to field the S-300 air defense system and its follow-on S-400 system in the UAE. End note.)

¶7. (S/NF) At USCENTCOM's direction, and with Directorate of Military Intelligence permission, U.S. Army missile defense experts recently traveled to the UAE to conduct an air defense assessment. Previous potential Patriot emplacement locations in the UAE were focused against the Iraqi threat. The new surveys, completed April 19, identified six new Patriot Advanced Capability-3 emplacement locations to deter the Iranian missile threat. They would protect U.S. military interests at Al Dhafra Air Base, Al Bateen Air Base, Minhad Air Base, Fujairah Airport, Jebel Ali Port, and Fujairah Port, and much of the surrounding metropolitan areas of Fujairah, Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

¶8. (S/NF) Patriot, of course, is not the whole answer. The issue to press home with the UAE is the need for strategic depth and a layered air defense. Multiple lines of defense in a strategic and sophisticated array, would have the best chance of convincing Iran that it faces a capable adversary across the Arabian Gulf. The creation and maturation of the Gulf Air Warfare Center at Al Dhafra Air Base is also a huge step in the direction of strategic preparation for a contingency and carries inherent deterrent value; nonetheless, an even more sophisticated line-up of exercise scenarios and more strategic depth in the UAE's (and the

GCC's) air defense posture would have a much greater deterrent effect on Tehran.

Developing a Shared Assessment and Agenda on Iraq

¶9. (S) Iraq is a natural focus of shared U.S.-UAE interests and the UAE has contributed both financially and politically to help stabilize that country. The July 3 visit of PM Malaki to Abu Dhabi, accompanied by his ministers for defense, oil, electricity, environment, and communications, was well received by both sides and led to the creation of three bilateral "groupings" to address security, military assistance, and investment (especially in Iraq's energy and telecommunications sectors where the UAE has sophisticated capabilities). At the GSD we may wish to inquire about the practical goals established by each of those groupings. We understand from GSD participant Yousef Al Otaiba that the military assistance portion of the UAE's commitment should include a visit to Iraq by representatives of the UAE's military and defense sectors to examine materiel and funding needs, as well as seeking linkages between Baghdad and UAE manufacturers of military hardware (ref D). We might also encourage the UAE to accelerate the process of sending an Ambassador to Baghdad, another issue raised during Malaki's visit.

¶10. (S/NF) The GSD will follow the July 22-23 visit of Deputy Secretary of Treasury Kimmitt and Department of State Counselor Zelikow to discuss the International Compact for Iraq, which was proposed by the GoI to lay a stronger foundation for the reconstruction of Iraq and put the country on a "credible path to sustainable development." This visit follows a July 20 preparatory meeting in Baghdad and is designed to get UAEG "buy in" for the compact. The UAE previously agreed to host an energy sector conference for Iraqi participants, and pledged \$215 million to Iraqi reconstruction in Madrid in 2004 (of which it has disbursed around \$80 million. The UAE has committed to forgiving most of the \$3.5 billion in Iraqi debt that it holds, but has said that it is bound by the GCC to adopt a common position on the debt. In commending the UAE for its substantial contributions, we might also encourage Abu Dhabi, as

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Ambassador Khalilzad has done, to lead the GCC on assistance to Iraq as a matter of regional stability.

¶11. (S/NF) The UAE continues active engagement with Iraq. It has publicly supported the new Iraqi government and has provided extensive security assistance, as well as attempted to influence Iraqi moderates to participate more in the political process. The UAE mission in Iraq faced recent terrorist attacks with the killing of two Iraqi employees in April and the kidnapping -- and subsequent release -- of the Deputy Charge d' Affaires in May. Despite being directly targeted, the Emiratis have stated that they intend to continue their humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people and to contribute to rebuild Iraq.

¶12. (C/NF) The UAE has also provided Iraq significant security assistance. Its joint training programs with Germany trained 431 Iraqi police and an engineering battalion. The UAE gave Iraq engineering and military equipment (including 100 trucks, four light reconnaissance aircraft, 43 French Panhard Armored Personnel Carriers) and \$8 million toward the transfer of M-113 APCs from Jordan. The UAE is currently interested in establishing ties with Baghdad for its manufacturers of ballistic vests, ammunition, and the TIGER, an all-terrain vehicle (similar in purpose to the Humvee) manufactured by the Bin Jabr Group of Abu Dhabi (ref D).

¶13. (S/NF) The UAEG shares our concern regarding Iranian influence in Iraq and has reached out to moderate Shi'a to encourage them to engage in the political process independent

of Iran. We understand that this effort includes visits to the UAE by senior Shi'a tribal leaders from southern Iraq to discuss ways to shed Iranian influence (according to State Security sources), as well as encouraging and facilitating Iyad Allawi's efforts to reach out to moderate Shi'a (ref E). The UAE's intelligence service is also working, in coordination with five regional neighbors, to support Iraqi "nationalists" with significant funding (ref J).

Regional Stability, Especially Iran and Lebanon

¶14. (S/NF) IRAN: As MbZ told PDUSD for Policy Henry on May 17 (ref J), the UAE is concerned that Iran has "superpower" ambitions and will have nuclear weapons in due time "unless somebody stops them." We also know that the Emiratis are ramping up their own surveillance activities targeting Iran and Islamic extremists. (Their Directorate of Military Intelligence -- DMI -- reportedly beefed up its personnel conducting "electronic surveillance" from 60 to over 900 in the last four years.) State Security Director Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al-Nahyan told us last month that his organization was forming a special unit to counter Iranian and Shi'a influence in the UAE (ref E). Sheikh Hazza had earlier expressed his concern to S/CT (ref K) that Hizballah in Lebanon was serving as an important source of intelligence for Iran, and MbZ told a State/DoD team in May that Hizballah was "more dangerous than Al-Qa'ida" (ref J).

¶15. (S) In spite of that background of disdain for Iran, the UAE prefers not to be confrontational in its public statements and might speak of Iran's "worrisome" nuclear program (ref L) or portray its concerns in terms of environmental and ecological risks rather than as a military threat (ref H). In calibrating a cautious (non-confrontational) public posture on Iran, the UAE must consider the implications for stability in a nation with very close economic ties to Iran, a significant Persian-origin population in the UAE, and a very proximate threat from a much larger power. The UAE therefore supports a strong U.S. stand on Iran, yet is hesitant to stand alongside us publicly on the front lines (and may hesitate to join as participants in exercises designed to send a clear message to Teheran).

¶16. (S) While pressing the UAE to join us insofar as possible in showing international solidarity against Iranian nuclear ambitions, the U.S. delegation will also want to elaborate on measures to deter Iran from acquiring or using WMD by establishing a credible, layered strategic air defense network, to include Patriot Missile and Air Defense, Aegis cruiser, Airborne Laser, and Theater High Altitude Air Defense. We might also press the UAE to enhance bilateral

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and multilateral training and exercises, to include crisis and consequence management training, counter-ballistic missile exercises, and denial and interdiction exercises. (Note: USCENTCOM Commander has forwarded through USLO a formal invitation for the UAE to host Exercise EAGLE RESOLVE 07 dealing with Theater Ballistic Missile Defense. We are awaiting a reply. End note.) In spite of UAE hesitations, we might also nudge them to consider participation in PSI exercises such as LEADING EDGE 07.

¶17. (S) The July 9-11 DOVE PINE military intelligence exchange with DMI is one example of a program which helps put the Iran threat, and our various perspectives, into a focused and practical context. During that exchange, DMI Chief Al-Mazrouie expressed his view that Iran would try to avoid escalation of the nuclear issue to the point of military conflict, although the UAE must prepare for any contingency. He felt Iran had too much to lose by provoking a U.S. Strike. His worst case scenario would be a unilateral Israeli strike against Iran -- endangering the entire region. (IIR 6 931 0168 06)

¶18. (C) LEBANON: The UAE is very concerned about the deteriorating situation in Lebanon. In convoking G-8 ambassadors on July 17 (septel), Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Mohammed Hussein Al-Sha'ali pressed for a concerted international effort, involving the Security Council, to seek an immediate ceasefire. He also called for greater UNSC efforts on Middle East peace in general. Al-Sha'ali's primary concerns were that Israel's actions recklessly violated Lebanese sovereignty, Israel could be strengthening Hezbollah and creating a new and more dangerous Al-Qa'ida, and the international community had lost its focus on peace talks. He also cited Iran's hand in financing and arming Hezbollah and reported Arab League consensus that Hezbollah's actions were unjustified.

¶19. (C) The UAE's interests in Lebanon are highlighted by a large local Lebanese community (over 70,000), Emirati investments now at risk in Lebanon, and the fact that Beirut is a favored summer vacation point for UAE nationals (the UAE assisted in the repatriation of over 3,000 locals and 6,000 UAE residents during the current crisis). President Khalifa has called for solidarity with Lebanon and an immediate ceasefire, as well as UNSC intervention. The UAE is also making significant humanitarian gestures to the Lebanese.

Energy Infrastructure Security

¶20. (S) President Khalifa, when he was still Crown Prince, took an interest in energy infrastructure security in 2004 and set up an inter-ministerial committee to coordinate security of key oil, power, and water facilities. Unfortunately, we do not see sufficient coordination having resulted from this exercise and the UAE remains in a position of vulnerability, largely due to the ad hoc nature of diverse approaches to the problem by disparate government entities. For example, the Ministry of Interior is responsible for securing the facilities and controlling access. The military, on the other hand, is responsible for defensive measures to protect the facilities from attack. It is not clear that the two entities effectively coordinate or are working to install interoperable systems.

¶21. (S/NF) The GSD takes place in the context of the UAE more firmly grasping the vulnerability of its offshore and beachside infrastructure (including oil, power, and desalination). MbZ told Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Townsend on 22 April that the UAE was "absolutely" worried about its oil facilities (ref N). He told Townsend that there are three international companies (two reportedly U.S. firms) conducting risk assessments of the oil infrastructure and maritime security for the UAEG. Ambassador delivered the Critical Energy Infrastructure Security Strategy demarche on July 5 to Al-Otaiba, requesting information on the UAE's current security posture for critical sites and offering USG assistance to improve security at those sites (ref C).

¶22. (S/NF) The UAE Navy for the first time ever included a maritime oil platform (OPLAT) defense scenario in an exercise with the US Fifth Fleet in February 2006. The Fifth Fleet is

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also working with the UAE Navy now to establish an OPLAT defense Standard Operating Procedure, and has offered to take UAE Navy representatives to Iraqi platforms to see how the coalition handles command and control for OPLAT defense. The Ministry of Interior is also enhancing security features at the major refineries and export terminals by adding sensors and CCTV systems.

Counterproliferation

¶23. (S) Given the enormous volume of goods shipped and traded through the UAE, it is vital that we continue to

impress upon the UAEG the importance of tight controls on items of proliferation concern -- including dual use items. With Dubai being Iran's largest non-oil trading partner and often the last foreign stop for vessels bound for Iran, UAE commitment to countering proliferation is essential. To date, the UAE's record on counterproliferation cooperation has been mixed. The UAEG has interdicted shipments, closed companies, and passed information to the U.S. in certain cases. However, when USG requests involve items or companies related to Iran (particularly if the items are dual-use), the UAE is more reluctant to respond out of concern about antagonizing its neighbor and jeopardizing a robust trading relationship.

¶24. (S/NF) A case in point is the Mayrow example, in which we strongly urged the closure of a group of Iranian front companies involved in acquiring IED components. The UAE promised full investigation and, to its credit, did ensure the quick closure of some of the related companies. However, Mayrow continues to operate in spite of its suspect activities, reportedly because it is owned by an Emirati national and is more difficult to close down through "extra-legal" means (ref I). Additionally, we have information that indicates one of the closed companies may have resumed operations. The USG requested on July 16 that the UAEG seize a suspect shipment related to this company (Atlinx Electronics), but we do not know if the UAE has taken action on this request (ref A).

¶25. (C) Despite considerable USG and international pressure, the UAE has not enacted an export control system comparable with those of members of the international control regimes. In 2004, the USG provided a draft template (in English and Arabic) for an export control law, and the UAE said it would enact legislation soon. However, the law remains "stuck in committee," and the UAE has never established a national control list. We continue to press the UAE to pass an export control law, and have increased pressure upon them to do so. In June, the U.S. Department of Commerce imposed more stringent pre-licensing checks on controlled U.S. technology bound for the UAE. The USG asked the UAE to enact legislation, create an effective enforcement regime, and consistently respond to U.S. requests for investigation, information, and interdiction. Should the UAE fail to take these measures by December, the USG may move the UAE to a more restrictive licensing category and/or require a license for all US-origin items transiting the UAE.

¶26. (C) The bilateral Counterproliferation Task Force (CTF) initiated last February offers a good platform for coordination, including through the three working groups on export control, transshipment and interdiction, and proliferation finance. We anticipate the second CTF meeting either in September or after Ramadan (which ends in late October). The UAE clearly has the capability to bolster its counterproliferation posture; it needs to put more attention into creating a strong legal framework and ensuring strict enforcement. We hope you will encourage the UAE during GSD discussions to assume a greater sense of urgency in pursuing enforceable export control legislation.

Counterterrorism

¶27. (C) The UAE has an impressive array of technical capabilities to bring to bear on the fight against terror. The leadership generally understands the threat and seeks to counter it with a combination of police work and up-to-date technical tools. Difficulties arise, however, in the ad hoc nature of coordination between the various institutions which

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need to fight a common threat with a common game plan. We need to encourage greater cohesion between relevant ministries and organizations to facilitate planning and acquisition programs that ensure that the UAEG's significant

capabilities are indeed brought to bear in full force on extremist activities. We are aware, for example, of impressive crisis management centers being created by the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, the Dubai authorities, and others. Likewise, USCENTCOM intelligence experts will conduct a CT affiliation seminar for both Ministry of Interior and DMI personnel July 15-30. These efforts are not, however, linked to one another in a strategically meaningful network. A robust counterterror effort must be better unified at a federal level to ensure strategic impact.

¶28. (S) The UAE is cooperative in pursuing information offered by the USG and we enjoy good working relations on counterterrorism in general. However, the UAE does not approach countering terrorism or extremism in a transnational context. When the UAE identifies an individual as a terror risk, it often arrests and deportes foreign nationals, while choosing to counsel and monitor UAE nationals. A more rigorous investigative posture might lead to more prosecutable cases and more effectively contribute to international efforts to shut down transnational terrorist networks. Recognizing that the USG is the only truly global player in the CT arena, the best approach for the UAE would be to materially enhance its cooperation with the U.S.

Participation

¶29. (S/NF) The five participants on the UAE side have been identified for their experience and proximity to Abu Dhabi Crown Prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan (MbZ). They represent a strong core of senior advisors in MbZ's trusted inner circle.

--- Major General Mohammed Sweidan Al-Qamzi, Commander, Air Force and Air Defense. Born in Dubai, General Sweidan joined the service in 1971 and has experience as a pilot and in the air defense field. He assumed his current command in January ¶2006. He is one of the few senior military leaders from Dubai and was the Al-Minhad Air Base Commander (located in Dubai) for many years. As the former Deputy Commander of the Air Force, General Mohammed oversaw for many years the UAE's Air Defense functions. He will be the primary GSD participant to provide military advice to the Chief of Staff and MbZ concerning the air defense portion of the discussions.

--- Major General Saeed Al-Rumaithy, General Headquarters Chief of Administration and Manpower. General Saeed rose through the Land Forces to ultimately serve as UAE Land Forces commander. His career encompassed significant training in the U.S. Now serving in a critical GHQ function with oversight of manpower and administration, he has experience as MbZ's office manager for about eight years and is reportedly being groomed to take over as GHQ Chief of Staff in the future.

--- Brigadier Eissa Al-Mazrouie, Director of Military Intelligence and Security. With years of experience as executive officer to MbZ when the latter was GHQ Chief of Staff, Al-Mazrouie enjoys insider status with the top leadership. He oversees a productive intelligence relationship with the U.S. military, including the July 9-12 DOVE PINE program focused on the exchange of military intelligence with DIA, NSA, ONI, and USCENTCOM on Iran and Iraq. Among his many duties he oversees the protection of key infrastructure -- a critical aspect of the UAE defense strategy.

--- Colonel Hamad Al-Shamsi, Director, External Affairs, State Security Directorate (SSD). Colonel Hamad brings to bear the experience and interests of State Security. Number three at SSD, he is a close advisor to SSD Director Sheikh Hazza bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, and often represents the SSD in meetings between U.S. officials and UAEG leaders.

--- Yousef Al-Otaiba, International Affairs Director, Office of the Abu Dhabi Crown Prince (MbZ). As an MbZ confidant, Al-Otaiba has proven to be one of the Embassy's best

interlocutors on the full range of security and policy issues

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of interest to the Crown Prince. Born into a wealthy merchant family (father was also the UAE's first Minister of Petroleum from 1973-90), Al-Otaiba has a degree in international relations from Georgetown University. He served in an executive position in the family automotive firm before his selection as an International Fellow at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington.

A Robust Political-Military Relationship in Context

¶30. (C) As a backdrop to the GSD, it is important to keep in perspective the very healthy overall U.S.-UAE bilateral political-military relationship. The UAE has continued its excellent support in the war on terror and it has cooperated with us in Afghanistan and in Iraq. This cooperation is described in detail in the 2005/2006 Report to Congress on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense (ref P). The UAE provides basing and overflight for U.S. reconnaissance and refueling assets, as well as naval logistics support. The F-16 Block 60 program is a showcase of cooperation between our nations. The UAE has taken delivery of 59 F-16 aircraft (one was lost in a mishap on January 9, 2006). There are U.S. pilots and training professionals here that are core instructors for the program. Another example of our expanding military cooperation is the Gulf Air Warfare Center at Al Dhafra Air Base. Modeled on the U.S. Air Force Air Warfare Center at Nellis AFB, NV, and the NATO Tactical Leadership Program at Florennes, Belgium, this regional facility is intended to enhance military interoperability and cooperation between the U.S. and members of the GCC, Egypt, Jordan, the UK and France. In the future, the U.S. plans to help the UAE develop a state-of-the-art tactical range, incorporate USN and USMC assets as participants, and use tankers (USAF and others) for air-to-air refueling.

¶31. (C) We look forward to the GSD building upon a strong political-military relationship and sharpening the focus of cooperation in the face of very real threats in the region.
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